

1                   ELECTROSURGICAL BIOPSY DEVICE AND METHOD

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3                   ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

4                   An electrosurgical biopsy device includes a stylet and a cannula  
5                   movably mounted on a base. The stylet has a shaft with a head at its  
6                   distal end and a stylet ablation element extending distally from the  
7                   head. The stylet shaft is disposed through the cannula for axial  
8                   translation therein between withdrawn and extended positions. The  
9                   cannula has an opening at its distal end and a cannula ablation element  
10                  adjacent the opening. Both ablation elements are activatable with  
11                  energy that ablates adjacent tissue. A translation mechanism  
12                  controllably moves (a) the stylet between the withdrawn and extended  
13                  positions and (b) the cannula between a proximal position and a distal  
14                  position relative to the base. In use, with the stylet in the withdrawn  
15                  position against the distal end of the cannula, and with the stylet  
16                  ablation element activated, the stylet and the cannula are pushed  
17                  through the skin and the underlying tissue until the stylet head is  
18                  adjacent a targeted tissue mass. Next, the stylet is extended distally  
19                  from the distal end of the cannula so that its head penetrates the tissue  
20                  mass. The cannula ablation element is then activated, and the cannula  
21                  is pushed through the tissue mass toward the stylet head, thereby cutting  
22                  a "core" through the tissue mass that is captured as a tissue specimen  
23                  within the distal end of the cannula. The cannula and the stylet are  
24                  then removed from the patient's body.